

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐ no ☒

Property Name: MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse Inventory Number: B-5234
Address: 506 S. Central Avenue Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21202-4315 County: Baltimore City
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East
Property Owner: Gapgallant, LLC Tax Account ID Number: 1441006
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 0000 Tax Map Number: 3
Project: Red Line Project Agency: Maryland Transit Administration
Agency Prepared By: EAC/Archaeology, Inc.
Preparer's Name: Benjamin Roberts Date Prepared: 3/19/2012
Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Library--Maryland Room, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Database, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation (CHAP)
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

The MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse at 506 S. Central Avenue was constructed in 1950 in no particular architectural style. It was originally used as a lumber warehouse, but today it is an office. The building occupies the entirety of a 0.40-acre parcel at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Fleet Street in Baltimore City. The rectangular plan building is oriented on a north-south axis, and its asymmetrical seven-bay façade faces south towards Fleet Street. Brick piers divide the bays. The front section of the building near Fleet Street is most likely one-story in height, with the rear portion at two-stories. Stretcher bricks clad the building's concrete block construction, and the flat roof is clad with bituminous material. The roof has a brick rowlock course with metal coping.

Located at the southeast corner at the façade, the primary entrance is a complete, non-historic renovation/replacement with large glass panes. It consists of a recessed entrance sheltered by the principal roof. A flat concrete and metal canopy with cantilevered over-hang is supported by square, steel columns sheltering the entrance. Metal cables above support the porch roof structure. A set of double metal and glass doors is approached by a concrete ramp with metal tube handrails. The rest of the walls within the porch

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MHT Comments:

Jim Talamo
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

6/11/12
Date

B. Kuntz
Reviewer, National Register Program

6/11/12
Date

consist of fixed glass panels. A reflective yellow film covers the glass of both the doors and the windows. Four oval shaped light fixtures are mounted on the porch ceiling. A secondary entrance is located near the west end of the façade; it consists of a single wood replacement door with multiple lights and a single light transom above. There are two rows of windows at this elevation, each with replacement windows. The windows at the bottom level have brick lintels and sills, while the shorter windows at the top level each has a segmental brick arch and brick sill. Between each bay at the façade are poles that extend beyond the roof; each pole has a modern light fixture mounted onto it.

There are eleven bays at the east elevation. The primary entrance mentioned above makes up the first two bays at the one-story end nearest the façade. The next four bays are also part of the one-story level of the building and consist of similar fenestration as those at the façade. There are, however, two windows per bay at this elevation, and three of the top story windows are boarded up. The two-story north section of this elevation consists of six bays. The first story has a single replacement door with concrete steps and landing, metal handrail, and a modern light fixture above. This bottom floor also has two windows within one of its bays, and three large rectangular vented metal openings at the three rear-most bays. The fenestration at the second floor level of this rear section has fenestration similar to the comparable ones at the front, although the rear has taller windows. A rectangular vented opening makes up the rear-most bay at the second story.

The north elevation consists of a single door and double door entrances at the first story level, both boarded up. There is also a modern light fixture and small vent. The second story consists of two large rectangular metal-vented openings. The west elevation abuts the adjacent building and is not visible.

The property is located in the commercial and residential setting of Inner Harbor East and fronts concrete sidewalks along S. Central Avenue and Fleet Street. Mature hardwoods occupy the Fleet Street sidewalk. A narrow alley runs along the building's north elevation. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed South Central Avenue Historic District (B-5058) is located to its north and west.

Historic Context

The building at 506 S. Central Avenue was constructed in 1950 by the MacLea Lumber Company as a warehouse for its successful wholesale lumber business. This building's address was originally 1024 Fleet Street, but it has since been changed. Baltimore native Daniel MacLea and George W. Eisenhauer founded the Eisenhauer-MacLea Lumber Company in 1900. Originally located at 306-318 West Falls Avenue in Baltimore, the company suffered through a number of fires, notably at a series of storage sheds in 1901, and total loss of their lumberyard to the Great Baltimore Fire in 1904. Although the business recovered, a new dock was to be extended onto their property on West Falls. Therefore, the lumber company relocated in 1905 to a large parcel located just east of the evaluated property, between S. Central Avenue, S. Eden Street, Eastern Avenue, and Fleet Street.

By this time, the surrounding area already had a long history with business and manufacture, an association made possible by transportation developments in the area. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, barges served the industries along Harford Run (B-5054), which still runs underneath Central Avenue. This natural stream connected them to the City Dock located to the south where goods and services could be transported by ships. The stream was gradually converted into a canal and open sewer starting in 1820 and eventually covered over, although portions of it were still exposed in the 1950s. Although the canal was still likely used for transport even as late as 1870, by the 1830s it was soon replaced by the railroad. In 1831, this area began to be served by the Baltimore & Port Deposit Railroad, which later became the Pennsylvania, Washington & Baltimore Railroad. The railroad's President Street Station was located just to the southwest of the evaluated building, between President and S. Exeter streets. This was a more efficient and wide reaching mode of transportation, with connecting lines going up Central Avenue and also east along Fleet Street towards Canton and beyond. Although this line served passengers, it was primarily used for freight, and

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Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

served the growing industry in this area.

The Eisenhauer-MacLea Lumber Company was also moving into an area with an extensive number of other lumber wholesalers. There were eleven square city blocks near the harbor between Jones Falls and Fells Point that contained wholesale lumber businesses, many of them centered along Fleet Street. Thomas Matthews & Son was the earliest to arrive, in 1815. Other lumber companies along Fleet Street included Otto Duker & Co., J. L. Gilbert & Brother Mill & Lumber Co., and Heise & Brun Mill & Lumber Co. Many of these wholesalers specialized in southern pine lumber, which was sold locally but also distributed throughout the United States. The growth of Baltimore's lumber industry was a reflection of the great expansion of American cities like Baltimore during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a result of the industrial revolution. The lumber from these wholesalers also provide lumber to the nearby furniture manufacturers, such as the Bagby Furniture Company located just west of 506 S. Central Avenue.

The Eisenhauer-MacLea Lumber Company expanded their operations at its new location, so that by 1915 they had acquired 506 S. Central Avenue for their office and lumberyard; meanwhile their original location had lumber sheds. In addition, its name had changed to MacLea Lumber Company. The business continued to grow and expand, remaining in the MacLea family with MacLea's sons and grandsons also working for the company. By 1932, the business acquired the former Thomas Matthews & Son lumberyard and office building. The current evaluated building was constructed in 1950 as a warehouse, replacing the lumberyard. The business retained the adjoining office, dry house and small lumber shed (all are no longer extant) that already existed on the property. Even as other nearby lumber businesses were closing or moving out in the 1950s, MacLea maintained their three properties on Fleet Street.

MacLea Lumber Company remained at 506 S. Central Avenue until 1959, and is currently located in Brooklyn, Maryland, as the MacLea Association Lumber Company. The Burns & Russell Company, a chemical research company for concrete block glazes, became the next occupant in 1960. The company moved its headquarters from its long-time location on North Point Road where Camden Yards is currently located. Founded in 1790, the company originally manufactured bricks, used both locally and nationally. Notably, they provided bricks for the construction of the Baltimore's Phoenix Shot Tower (1828), and the Mount Clare Station of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (1830). The change in the building's use from lumber to chemical research in 1960 is a reflection of the changing character of the area. The area remained in an industrial setting, although businesses began to leave by the late 1950s, as large, planned industrial parks in the suburbs were cheaper and offered more space. In addition, industries were no longer dependent on the railroad for transportation, instead relying heavily on trucks, so they no longer needed to be close to the city center. By the 1990s, a redevelopment project, implemented by the city of Baltimore, created the Inner Harbor East renewal area. The area transitioned from industrial to mixed-use commercial and residential.

Today the MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse continues to be part of the Inner Harbor East development. The Laureate Education, Inc. has occupied 506 S. Central Avenue since 1992, providing education services through the Sylvan Learning Institute. The evaluated building retains its original shape and form, brick construction, and fenestration. However, it has lost its visual association with the lumber industry; the office, dry house and small lumber shed on this property no longer exist, and the building has a replacement front porch/entrance, and new sashes and vents within its window openings. There are also new doors. The former lumberyard further to the west along Fleet Street, and the lumber shed to the east, both no longer exist.

Significance Evaluation

The property at 506 S. Central Avenue in Baltimore City was evaluated for significance under NRHP Criteria A, B, and C, using the guidelines set forth in the National Register Bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation."

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The former warehouse was originally built for and occupied by the MacLea Lumber Company. This was a successful business, with their lumber operations also located on two other properties along Fleet Street. It was one of many other lumber companies located in the area, together creating a lumber district that transported their product locally but also nationwide during a time of extensive building in the United States. Although their competitors in the area closed or moved on, the MacLea Lumber Company continued at this location, even building a new warehouse in 1950 at 506 S. Central Avenue. However, this property does not have an important association with this historic context. In addition, the evaluated property has had alterations so that it does not have a direct association with its original use. Also, the other properties along Fleet Street associated with the MacLea Lumber Company no longer contain the structures associated with this lumber company, leaving only remnants of the original complex. Therefore, the MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. It is not eligible under Criterion A.

Research has found that the property is not associated with the lives of persons significant in the past and therefore is not eligible under Criterion B.

The evaluated building is a former lumber warehouse building with no architectural style; it is typical of light industrial architecture of its era. Its features include its minimal design devoid of architectural ornament, concrete block construction with brick cladding, and window openings with brick lintels and sills. This building does not retain character-defining features from its era of construction and is not a good example of a particular type, period, or method of construction. In addition, it has been altered. The building is not the work of a master, does not possess high artistic values, and is not part of a potential historic district. Therefore, it is not eligible under Criterion C.

The property was not evaluated under Criterion D as part of this assessment.

Based on the evaluated criteria, the MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse is not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Works Consulted

Bird, Betty, Julie Darsie, and Carolyn Eastman. "South Central Avenue Historic District (B-5058)," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, January 2001.

"Burns and Russell Expanding Operation." The Baltimore Sun. 3 March 1968, p. F11.

"Daniel MacLea Dies, Aged 82." The Baltimore Sun, 27 June 192, p. 25.

Gunts, Edward. "Last of Buildings Coming Down as City Works on Plan for Inner Harbor East." The Baltimore Sun. 11 June 1985, p. 8B.

"Historical Summary of the Harford Run Drain (National Register Eligible)," [1998].

Kelly, Jacques. "Alexander H. Russell V, 91, Managed Chemical, Masonry Products Firm Dies." The Baltimore Sun. 30 August 2005, p. 6B.

"Like Huge Torch: Blaze Starting in Lumber Yard Sweeps Over a Large Area." The Sun. 26 August 1910, p. 14.

"Lumber Company Swept by Fire." The Baltimore Sun. 2 June 1956, p. 28.

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"Lumber Company to Build Office." The Baltimore Sun. 8 May 1910, p. 4.

"Lumber Fire Damage Put at \$175,000." The Sun. 28 January 1932, p. 22.

"Phoenix Shot Tower." National Historic Landmark Summary Listing. National Park Service.
[Http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=878&ResourceType=Structure](http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=878&ResourceType=Structure).

Roberts, Harold S. "Firm Tells of Franchise." The Baltimore Sun. 8 November 1963, p. 29.

The Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Maps: 1915, 1951.

"Street Patterns to Change in Inner Harbor Area." The Baltimore Sun. 2 August 1970, p. F1.

"Will Build Immense Shed: Lumber Concern Buys Old Barrel Factory." The Baltimore Sun. 22 February 1905, p. 12.

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MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse (B-5234)
506 S. Central Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland



B-5234 Boundary

Site Plan



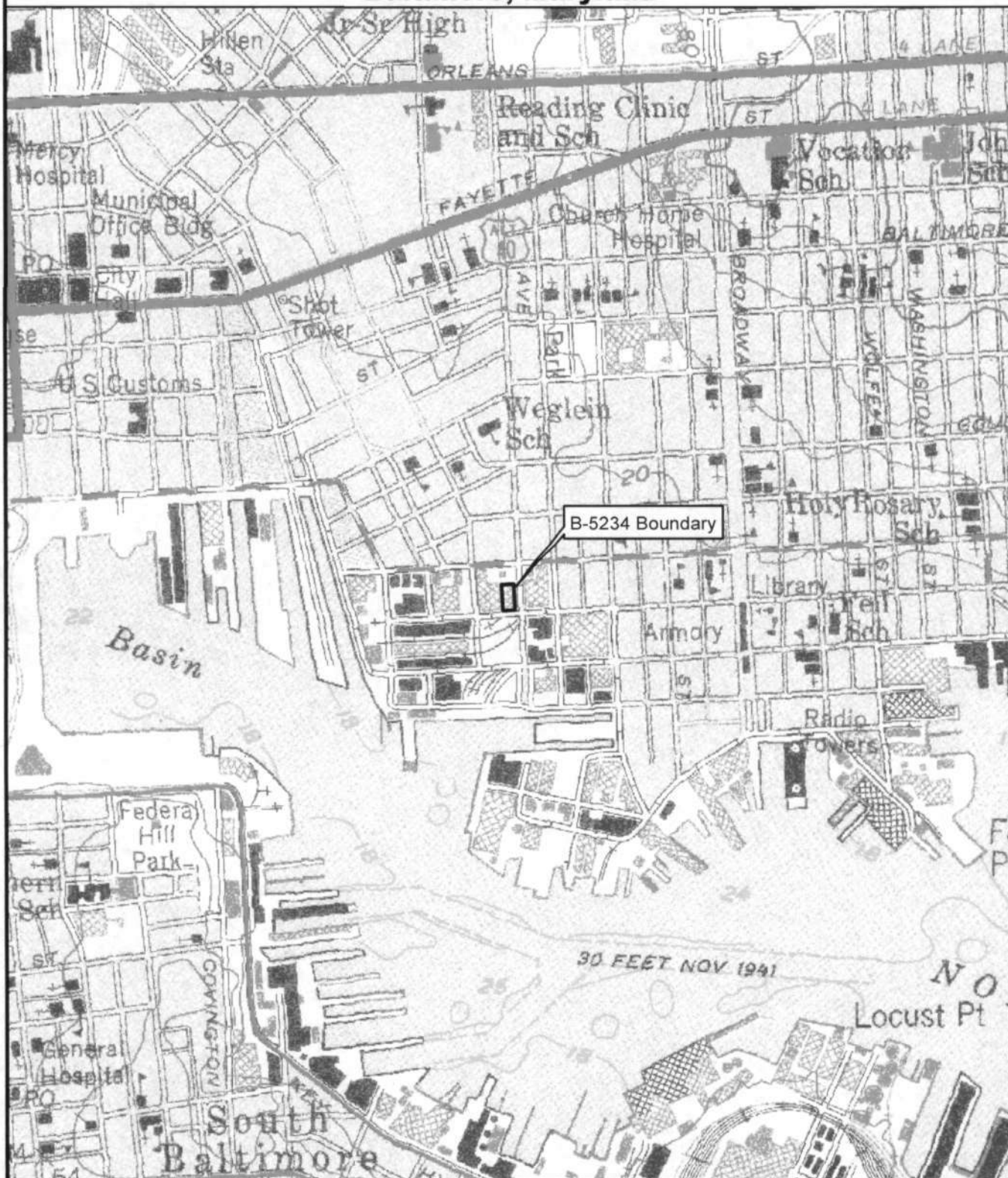
0 50 100 200
Feet

May 2012

MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse (B-5234)

506 S. Central Avenue

Baltimore, Maryland



Location Map

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

May 2012

PHOTO LOG

B-5234, MacLea Lumber Company Warehouse

B-5234_2011-09-09_01

-South elevation, corner entrance

B-5234_2011-09-09_02

-East façade, looking northwest

B-5234_2011-09-09_03

-East façade, north elevation, looking southwest

HP 100 Gray Photo ink on HP glossy premium plus photo paper. CD-R Gold.



B-5234

Maclea Lumber Company Warehouse
506 S. Central Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/9/11

South Elevation, Corner Entrance

1/3



B-5234

Maced Lumber Company Warehouse
506 S. Central Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/9/11

East Side, looking northwest

2/3



B-5234

Miles Lumber Company Warehouse
506 S. Central Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/9/11

East facade, north elevation, looking Southwest

3/3